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Illegal Israeli actions in Occupied East Jerusalem and the rest of the Occupied Palestinian Territory

Security Council
Sixty-seventh year

Identical letters dated 23 November 2012 from the Permanent Observer of Palestine to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General and the President of the Security Council

I regret that I must draw your attention to ongoing violations that are being perpetrated by Israel, the occupying Power, against the Palestinian people in the Occupied Palestinian Territory, including East Jerusalem. The situation on the ground, particularly following the latest Israeli military attacks against the Gaza Strip, which caused high Palestinian casualties and massive destruction, remains extremely fragile. The occupying Power's illegal practices and provocations risk undermining the restoration of calm that we are all seeking and risk further and seriously destabilizing this critical situation.

Israel's illegal actions have included violations of the ceasefire agreement regarding the Gaza Strip, which was reached between the parties on 21 November 2012, as well as other illegal, heavy-handed measures against the Palestinian people in the rest of the Occupied Palestinian Territory. Today, in southern Gaza, in a border area east of Khan Younis, Israeli occupying forces fired upon Palestinian civilians, killing a young man, Anwar Abdulhadi Qudaih, age 21, who was shot in the head, and injuring at least 19 people.

Today's killing adds to the tragically long list of Palestinians killed by Israel in this most recent aggression against our people in besieged Gaza Strip. In this regard, by the time of the conclusion of the ceasefire agreement, reports from the ground indicate that the Israeli occupying forces had killed more than 160 Palestinians and injured more than 1,230 people, with innocent women and children comprising a very large proportion of the casualties of this inhumane and brutal onslaught.

Even on the day in which the ceasefire was signed, Palestinian lives continued to be lost as the Israeli occupying forces launched hundreds of deadly attacks against civilian areas, including many refugee camps, in Gaza. Among those killed on that day, 21 November 2012, were more children, including, inter alia, a 2-year-old child, Abdulrahman Na'eem; a brother and a sister, Ayman and Hadeel Al-Assaly, and their father, Talal Al-Assaly; a 4-year-old girl, Ilham Nabahin; an 80-year-old man, Ibrahim Abu Nasr, and his daughter Ameera; and a 13-year-old boy, Mahmoud Abu

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Khusa. Also, today, the body of another member of the Al-Dalou family was found dead in the rubble days following an Israeli attack on their home in Al-Nasr neighbourhood of Gaza City, which killed 11 members of their family, with one family member, a young girl, still missing.

At the same time, the occupying Power continues its illegal practices throughout the West Bank, including East Jerusalem, intensifying in recent days in particular its use of excessive and lethal force against Palestinian civilians, including peaceful protesters, and its military raids into villages, towns and cities in which the occupying forces have, every single day, been arresting and detaining dozens of Palestinian civilians, including minors and elected officials, adding to the thousands of Palestinians who remain in Israeli captivity. These arrest raids by the occupying Power have often been accompanied by forced entry into Palestinian homes and the destruction of properties.

Since the Israeli military aggression against Gaza began, reports indicate that at least 230 Palestinians have been arrested by Israel. The arrests made in the dawn hours of today have included several members of the Palestinian Legislative Council (PLC). We call for the immediate release of all of those arrested in recent days by the occupying Power, and reiterate our call for the release of all Palestinians who are being illegally and arbitrarily imprisoned, including hundreds of children and women.

We call on the international community, including the Security Council, to remain vigilant in their demands for a complete cessation of hostilities and for compliance by Israel, the occupying Power, with all of its legal obligations, without exception. An unequivocal message must be conveyed to the Israeli Government that its illegal actions and provocations will not be tolerated and that it will be held responsible for such actions and for any further destabilization of the situation on the ground and the consequences in this regard.

We stand at a crossroads and we urgently appeal to the international community to stand with the Palestinian people and their leadership in choosing the path of peace over the path of aggression and perpetual conflict. This is more urgent than ever in order to save and protect civilian lives and to salvage the slim prospects that remain for realizing the two-State solution for peace on the basis of the pre-1967 borders.

This letter is in follow-up to our previous 443 letters regarding the ongoing crisis in the Occupied Palestinian Territory, including East Jerusalem, since 28 September 2000. These letters, dated from 29 September 2000 (A/55/432-S/2000/921) to 20 November 2012 (A/ES-10/571-S/2012/866) constitute a basic record of the crimes being committed by Israel, the occupying Power, against the Palestinian people since September 2000. For all of these war crimes, acts of State terrorism and systematic human rights violations committed against the Palestinian people, Israel, the occupying Power, must be held accountable and the perpetrators must be brought to justice.

I should be grateful if you would arrange to have the text of the present letter distributed as a document of the tenth emergency special session of the General Assembly, under agenda item 5, and of the Security Council.

(*Signed*) Riyad **Mansour**
Ambassador
Permanent Observer of Palestine to the United Nations